FAQ Frequently Asked Questions

Why do I get this report each year?
Community water system operators are required by federal law to provide their customers with an annual water quality report. The report helps people make informed choices about the water they drink. It lets people know what contaminants are in their drinking water and how these contaminants may affect their health. It also gives the system operators a chance to tell customers what it takes to deliver safe drinking water.

Why does my water sometimes look "milky"?
The "milky" look is caused by tiny air bubbles in the water. The water in the pipes is under pressure, and gases (the air) are dissolved and trapped in the pressurized water as it flows into your glass. As the air bubbles rise in the glass, they break free at the surface, thus clearing up the water. Although the milky appearance might be disconcerting, the air bubbles won't affect the quality or taste of the water.

How can I keep my pet's water bowl germ free?
Veterinarians generally recommend that water bowls be washed daily with warm, soapy water—normally when you change the water. Scour the corners, nooks, and crannies of the water dish using a small scrub brush. In addition, once a week put water bowls into the dishwasher to sanitize them with hot water. In most situations, disinfectants like bleach are not needed; warm, soapy water is all you need to keep your pet's water clean and safe.

Is it okay to use hot water from the tap for cooking and drinking?
No, always use cold water. Hot water is more likely to contain rust, copper, and lead from household plumbing and water heaters. These substances can dissolve into hot water faster than they do into cold water, especially when the faucet has not been used for an extended period of time.

Violation
Indiana American Water had a violation for inadequate Chlorine residual in the distribution system.The violation beginning date was August 21, 2013, and the end date was October 1, 2013.

Our virus removal results for the months of August and September 2013 showed that our system was below the treatment technique standard required for virus inactivation and/or removal. During the months listed above, our public water system did not meet the required chlorine residual in the distribution system.

Do you have questions?
For more information about this report, or for any questions relating to your drinking water, please contact Harry Heath at (219) 962-8511.

En Español
Este informe incluye información importante sobre el agua potable. Si tiene preguntas o comentarios sobre éste informe en español, favor de llamar al tel. (219) 962-8511 – para hablar con una persona bilingüe en español.

City of
Lake Station
PWS ID #5245027

2015 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report

Our Drinking Water Is Regulated

The City of Lake Station is pleased to share this report with you. This report is a summary of the quality of the water we provide our customers. The analysis covers January 1 through December 31, 2015, and was made by using the data from the most recent U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) required tests and is presented in the attached pages. We hope this information helps you become more knowledgeable about what's in your drinking water.

Source of Drinking Water

The sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally-occurring minerals and, in some cases, radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.

Contaminants that may be present in source water include:

- Microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.
- Inorganic contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming.
- Pesticides and herbicides, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban stormwater runoff, and residential uses.
- Organic chemical contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are byproducts of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.
- Radioactive contaminants, which can be naturally-occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

Where Do We Get Our Drinking Water?

The City of Lake Station gets its water from four wells. In addition, the City of Lake Station also purchases a portion of its water from Indiana American Water's Northwest Operations. The water source for Indiana American Water's Northwest Operations, serving Gary and surrounding communities is Lake Michigan. Water treatment is provided at two water filtration plants. During 2015, the City of Lake Station purchased and pumped more than 348 million gallons of water for our customers.

All Drinking Water May Contain Contaminants

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791).

Lead and Drinking Water

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. The City of Lake Station is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in customer plumbing components. When your water has been sitting in the home piping for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at www.epa.gov/safewater/lead.

2015 Test Results

We routinely monitor for constituents in your drinking water according to Federal and State laws. The test results table shows the results of our monitoring for the period of January 1st to December 31st, 2015. In the table you might find terms and abbreviations you are not familiar with. To help you better understand these terms we've provided the following definitions:

Definitions

Action Level (AL) – the concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

Action Level Goal (ALG) – the level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. ALGs allow for a margin of safety.

Avg. – Regulatory compliance with some MCLs is based on running annual average of monthly samples.

Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) – the highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG) – the level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL) – the highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG) – the level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.

mrem – millirems per year (a measure of radiation absorbed by the body).

NA – not applicable.

ND – not detected.

NTU – Nephelometric Turbidity Units.

Parts per billion (ppb) – micrograms per liter (µg/l) or one ounce in 7,800,000 gallons of water.

Parts per million (ppm) – milligrams per liter (mg/l) or one ounce in 7,800 gallons of water.

Parts per trillion (ppt) – nanograms per liter (ng/l)

pCi/L – picocuries per liter

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791).

Regulated Substances (measured on the water leaving the treatment facility)

Substance (Units)	Year Sampled	MCLG	MCL	Lake Station Level Found	Violation Yes/No	Typical Source
Alpha emitters (pCi/L)	2011	0	15	4.6	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Barium (ppm)	2015	2	2	0.012	No	Erosion of natural deposits; discharge of drilling wastes; discharge from metal refineries
Beta/photon emitters (pCi/L)	2011	0	50[1]	5.8	No	Decay of natural and man-made deposits
Cyanide (ppb)	2015	200	200	ND	No	Discharge from steel/metal factories; discharge from plastic and fertilizer factories
Fluoride (ppm)	2015	4	4	0.59	No	Water additive which promotes strong teeth; erosion of natural deposits; discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Nickel (ppb)	2015	NA	NA[2]	ND	No	Erosion of natural deposits; discharge from electroplating, stainless steel, and alloy products, mining and refining operations
Nitrate (ppm)	2015	10	10	2.8	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits
Selenium (ppm)	2015	0.05	0.05	ND	No	Discharge from petroleum and metal refineries; erosion of natural deposits; discharge from mines
Total Organic Carbon (Removal Ratio)[3]	2014	NA	TT	NA	No	Naturally present in the environment

Bacteria Results (measured on the water leaving the treatment facility)

Substance	Year Sampled	MCLG	MCL	Lake Station Level Found	Violation Yes/No	Typical Source
Total Coliform	2015	0	More than 5% of samples per month	ND	No	Naturally present in the environment

Disinfection Byproducts (measured in the distribution system)

Substance (Units)	Year Sampled	MCLG [MRDLG]	MCL [MRDL]	Lake Station Level Found	Violation Yes/No	Typical Source
Total Trihalomethanes - TTHM (ppb)	2015	NA	80	18.6	No	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Haloacetic Acids - HAA5 (ppb)	2015	NA	60	7.56	No	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Chloramines (ppm)	2014	[4]	[4]	NA	No	Water additive used to control microbes
Chlorine (ppm)	2015	[4]	[4]	2	No	Water additive used to control microbes

Turbidity - a measure of the clarity of the water (measured on the water leaving the treatment facility)

Substance (Units)	Year Sampled	MCLG	MCL	Lake Station Highest Single Measurement	Violation Yes/No	Typical Source
Turbidity (NTU)[4]	2014	NA	TT	NA	No	Soil runoff
Turbidity % meeting standards	2014	NA	TT	NA	No	

Unregulated Substances (measured on the water leaving the treatment facility)

Substance (Units)	Year Sampled	Lake Station Level Found	Typical Source
Chromium (ppb)	2013 - 2014	ND (2014)	Naturally occurring element; used in making steel and other alloys; chromium-3 or -6 forms are used for chrome plating, dyes and pigments, leather tanning and wood preservation
Hardness (ppm)	2014	NA	Naturally occurring
Hexavalent Chromium (ppb)[5]	2013	NA	Discharge from steel and pulp mills; erosion of natural deposits
Molybdenum (ppb)	2013 - 2014	NA	Naturally occurring element found in ores and present in plants, animals and bacteria; commonly used form molybdenum trioxide used as a chemical reagent
Sodium (ppm)	2015	180	Naturally occurring
Sulfate (ppm)	2015	71	Erosion of natural deposits
1,4-Dioxane (ppb)	2013	NA	Cyclic aliphatic ether; used as a solvent or solvent stabilizer in manufacture and processing of paper, cotton, textile products, automotive coolant, cosmetics and shampoos
Strontium (ppb)	2013	NA	Naturally-occurring element; historically, commercial use of strontium has been in the faceplate glass of cathode-ray tube televisions to block X-ray emissions
Testosterone (ppt)	2013	NA	Androgenic steroid naturally produced in the human body and used in pharmaceuticals

Tap Water Samples: Lead and Copper

City of Lake Station

Substance (Units)	Year Sampled	MCLG	Action Level	90th Percentile	Number of Samples	Number of Samples Above Action Level	Violation Yes/No	Typical Source
Copper (ppm)	2014	1.3	1.3	0.14	30	0	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits
Lead (ppb)	2014	0	15	0.5	30	0	No	

1. The MCL for Beta/photo emitters is written as 4 mrem/year. EPA considers 50 pCi/L the level of concern for beta emitters.
2. Although Nickel is a regulated contaminant, there is no MCL.
3. The value reported under "Level Found" is the lowest running annual average ratio between the percentage of TOC actually removed to the percentage of TOC required to be removed. A value of greater than or equal to 1.0 indicates that the water is in compliance with TOC removal requirements.
4. Turbidity is caused by particles suspended in water. We monitor it because it is a good indicator of the effectiveness of our filtration system.
5. Hexavalent Chromium is not currently regulated as an individual substance. Indiana American Water voluntarily performs this monitoring based on recommendations from the U.S. EPA. For more information on Hexavalent Chromium, please visit the EPA web site.

City of Lake Station

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